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BULLETIN OF THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR 1915¹

WHILE the history of the Museum during the past year has not been so eventful as that of several of those just preceding it, it has been marked by occasions of importance, notably by the opening to the public of the new series of galleries containing the William H. Riggs Collection of armor presented the previous year; by bequests and numerous gifts of exceptional intrinsic and artistic value; by the establishment of a Department and Curatorship of Far Eastern Art; and by ever-increasing activities in all its various fields of usefulness, especially in its educational work. Although the number of persons visiting the galleries has not been so large as it was in the years when the Morgan and Altman Collections were first placed on view, the number of students and visitors who have used the collections with a special purpose has increased to a gratifying proportion of the total attendance.

THE TRUSTEES

A resolution was adopted by the Board of Trustees at a meeting held June 14, in memory of John White Alexander, who died on May 31, 1915, and who, as President of the National Academy of Design, had been a Trustee *ex officio* since 1909.

At the June meeting of the Board, Charles W. Gould was elected to fill a vacancy in the Class of 1917; and J. Alden Weir, successor to Mr. Alexander in the Presidency of the Academy, was introduced to the Trustees at the October meeting.

COST OF ADMINISTRATION

The cost of administration of the Museum for the past year was \$407,357.04. Of this amount \$200,000 was paid by the City of New York through an appropria-

tion made for this purpose in its annual budget, this sum being 49+ per cent of the whole; \$61,311.32 was received from admission fees, membership dues, sale of handbooks, etc.; and \$30,214.40 from General and Special Endowment funds, leaving a deficit of \$115,831.32 to be paid by the Trustees from other sources, including private contributions.

The City has contributed annually to the support of the Museum since 1873: in 1905 and 1906, \$150,000 annually; in 1907 and 1908, \$160,000 annually; and from 1909 to the present time, \$200,000 annually. In 1905 and 1906 the City contributed 66+ per cent; in 1907 and 1908, 62+ per cent; in 1909-1911, 63+ per cent; in 1912, 60+ per cent; in 1913, 55+ per cent; in 1914, 43+ per cent; and for 1915 it will have contributed 49+ per cent of the total expense. On the average, 17+ per cent of the cost of the running expenses has been met out of the amount received from admission fees, membership dues, sale of handbooks, etc., and 7 per cent out of the income from General and Special Endowment funds, leaving a deficit ranging from \$14,436.02 in 1905 to that of the present year to be paid by or through the Trustees.

The cost of administration has steadily increased during the period from \$216,257.97 in 1905, to \$407,357.04 in 1915. To understand the reason for this, it should be borne in mind that the total number of square feet of exhibition floor space in 1905 was 151,500, as contrasted with 266,800 in 1915; that the total of accessions received in 1905 was 2,574 objects, as against 2,908 in 1915, and that the number of employees of all classes has increased from 125 to 260.

MEMBERSHIP

In recognition of their important and valuable bequests or contributions, John L. Cadwalader, Benjamin P. Davis, Lillian Stokes Gillespie, James B. Hammond, and Mrs. Morris K. Jesup have been declared Benefactors of the Museum.

Four transfers of Fellowships have been made; and four Fellows in Perpetuity and twenty-one Fellows for Life have been elected. Annual, Sustaining, and Fellow-

¹An abridgment of the Annual Report of the Trustees for 1915, to give the salient points. The report has been printed and will be sent to all the members of the Museum, and to others on application.

ship Members have been elected during the year to the number of 605. To all of these new members, as well as to all who have contributed to the support of the Museum by the payment of membership dues, the Trustees desire to express their sincere and appreciative acknowledgments. The amounts paid by Fellows are added to the Endowment Fund; those of Annual Members are applied to the payment of administration expenses.

Active efforts to increase the membership have been made since September—following a period of inactivity in this direction because of the belief that the time was inopportune—and the urgent appeals made through the columns of the BULLETIN, by letter, and through the services of a special membership secretary, appointed by the Trustees, have resulted in a gratifying enrolment which has not only recouped the losses of the inactive months, but has increased the membership to a larger total than ever before.

ATTENDANCE

The number of persons who visited the galleries during the year was 696,024, and those who attended lectures in the Lecture Hall and Class Rooms counted 11,666, making the total attendance at the Museum 707,690, which is a decrease of 217,459 from the total of the previous year. While the falling off, at first sight, seems to be extraordinary, an examination of the records of the attendance of earlier years, and of the conditions affecting it, shows that the attendance of the past year has been a normal one. The number of visitors in 1914 (913,230) was greatly increased over the normal through the interest created by the opening of the J. Pierpont Morgan and Benjamin Altman Collections; that of 1913 (839,419), by the exhibition of paintings belonging to the late Mr. Morgan; and that of 1909 (937,883), by the visitors to the Hudson-Fulton Exhibition of Dutch and American Art. The attendance of the past year is greater than that of 1912 (690,183), when there was no special exhibition of the kind that draws an unusual number of people.

This diminution is undoubtedly the re-

sult, also, of absorbing interest in the war and of the unprecedented demand of the present time for labor of all sorts—a demand which has left fewer persons with the leisure required for visits to the Museum.

It should be observed that the number of persons visiting the Museum on holidays is only slightly below that of 1914; and that the number of teachers and classes, students, copyists, and designers using the collections, and those attending lectures is greater than ever before. Moreover, the sale of catalogues, other than the catalogue of the Morgan Collection, has been greater than in past years, in spite of the diminished attendance; while the sale of photographs and post cards, the use of lantern slides and of the books of the Library tell a story of extension of interest in a direction indicating real results.

ACCESSIONS

The number of objects of art received during the year was 2,908, of which 390 were received from three bequests, 242 by gift of 48 persons, and 2,276 by purchase. It is interesting to note that of these, the largest number of accessions was acquired by the Department of Egyptian Art. The additions to the Department of Classical Art have been fewer than usual, owing to war conditions in Europe, while to the collection of paintings, seventy-one pictures were added by bequest, but only twenty-eight by purchase. American art was represented by nineteen paintings and two sculptures, including the Melvin Memorial Monument, Mourning Victory, by Daniel Chester French. Of these, eleven paintings came by bequest, two by gift, and six by purchase; one sculpture came by gift, and one by purchase.

A. BEQUESTS

The important and valuable bequests—of Egyptian and classical antiquities, and other objects of art, numbering 311, from Mrs. Mary Anna Palmer Draper; of seventy-one paintings of the Dutch, French, Spanish, Austrian, British, and American Schools received from Mrs. Morris K. Jesup; and eight tapestries received from Mrs. Lillian Stokes Gillespie—are referred

to in detail in the reports of the departments to which the objects belong.

The following bequests of money have been made: from Jacob Langeloth, \$5,000; from Emily C. Bondy, \$10,000; from Edward A. Penniman, \$3,000; and from Hugo Reisinger, \$50,000 for the purchase of German paintings and sculpture.

Under the will of the late Amos F. Eno, now in litigation, the Museum received an unconditional bequest of \$250,000; and by the terms of the will of the late Theodore M. Davis, also in litigation, all his works of art which the Museum may select.

B. GIFTS

Of the gifts received, the Egyptian Department has been the recipient of 59 objects, the collection of ceramics has been augmented by 70 pieces, and the textile collection by 33 pieces.

To all donors, the Trustees extend their thanks and hearty appreciation of their generosity and interest.

C. LOANS

Important loans have been received from 58 friends of the Museum, numbering 1,182 objects. Special mention is made of the generous action of the Executors of the Theodore M. Davis Estate in lending objects of various kinds, pending litigation over the settlement of that estate. Two hundred and sixty-two pieces have been lent for the Special Exhibition of Textiles; 68 pieces to the Department of Armor, 30 pieces of furniture to the Department of Decorative Arts, and 61 paintings to the Department of Paintings.

The collections lent by the late J. Pierpont Morgan, with the exception of the French eighteenth-century furniture, panels by Fragonard, and Chinese porcelains and a few individual objects have remained on exhibition during the year.

D. PURCHASES

That fewer purchases should have been made during the year will not be a matter of surprise in view of the present conditions in Europe; but it should be said that, owing to the financial uncertainty at the beginning of the year, a policy of economy in the

expenditure of purchasing funds was adopted by the Trustees, which held during the year. To the Egyptian collections, 1,796 objects have been added by purchase, and to the classical collection 45 objects. Twenty-eight paintings, as said above, have been bought out of the income from funds for this purpose.

EDUCATIONAL WORK

During the current year for the first time two members of the staff have been actively engaged in educational work. This has resulted in an increase in the meeting of requests for instruction, and has also given scope for greater development of this phase of Museum activity.

WORK WITH SCHOOLS

The Public Schools have used the instruction service of the Museum in an increasingly organized fashion. Definite courses have been requested and have been given in direct connection with, or as accompaniments to school work. The courses include one on the history of art given to a class of boys from the DeWitt Clinton High School, and one for a group of boys from the High School of Commerce on the collections from the standpoint of commercial and industrial history. Another organized group consists of teachers from elementary schools, who requested a course of gallery talks on painting. At the request of High School classes, short series of lectures or single talks have been given on painting, on historical periods, furniture, costume, textiles, armor, lace, the Altman Collection, and the Iliad and Odyssey. Many of these are illustrated by lantern slides in the Class Room, followed by visits to the galleries.

Talks have been given in almost every gallery of the Museum, not only to High School pupils, but to a number from the elementary schools. These have made the object of their visit the study of art appreciation more frequently than is the case with High School classes, which have made the connection largely with History or English.

As a part of the work with Public Schools, lectures have been given in both elementary and high school buildings. The attendance

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has varied from 80 to 1,300. Such lectures deal largely, though not exclusively, with the use of the Museum in connection with school work.

A demand for consecutive study has also come from individuals or small groups of people. Meetings are held in the Class Room, where books and photographs may be consulted, followed by study in the galleries. A course in laboratory drawing in connection with the history of painting has been given.

WORK CONDUCTED BY OTHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, TEACHERS, ETC.

The use of the Museum galleries and collections by lecturers and teachers not on the Museum staff has greatly increased. Columbia University, through the lecturer in its Extension Course, Dr. George H. Kriehn, has had two courses of sixteen lectures each on the Appreciation of Art, which have been so largely attended that it became necessary to divide them into three sections; classes in the New York University Extension Courses, under the direction of Louis Weinberg, have had two courses of sixteen lectures on Mural Painting; Hunter College has been represented by various professors and teachers, who have used both the class rooms and the galleries; and several of the instructors of Teachers College have frequently come with their classes, or sent their students by themselves, for special work in connection with the collections.

Several teachers of the High Schools have brought their classes regularly to the Museum, and the Docent of the School Art League, appointed by the League for the encouragement of art in the schools through study in the Museums, has met many classes from the Grammar Grades.

The Art in Trades Club has met regularly each month for dinner in the restaurant, and then for discussion in the galleries; the Children's Social Settlement has met regularly once a week; George Leland Hunter has had several sets of lectures on Tapestries, Furniture, and Mediaeval Arts, and Mr. John Getz has talked to groups on the Chinese porcelains.

The Walker School of Design from Bos-

ton made their annual visit to the Museum in the spring, staying for a week, and working in the different departments.

WORK DONE WITH DESIGNERS, MANUFACTURERS, AND COPYISTS

The practical use of the Museum by artists, art students, and designers has increased steadily during recent years; the average daily attendance of this class of workers last year was 25. Two thousand four hundred and forty-eight permits for copying in the galleries, and 87 for studying and copying in the Library were issued, and 2,925 copies and studies were made.

To commercial developments incident to the war, we owe the increased interest which has been manifested by designers and manufacturers in making use of the collections for practical purposes, an interest which we were able to anticipate and foster to some degree by the publication of BULLETIN supplements, and later by the exhibition of textiles. Designers of well-known firms, both of New York and elsewhere, have made sketches of laces, dresses, furniture, jewelry, pottery, glass, textiles, carpets, and many other classes of objects.

CONCLUSION

The new year of the Museum opens with greater opportunities for service to the community than ever before: the equipment in collections, the ability to display them adequately, and the desire to elucidate them wisely having reached a high point of efficiency. The opening of the new wing on Fifth Avenue, with the rearrangement of the collections which will be shown in it and the general reclassification of other collections which will follow this opportunity for expansion will afford still greater scope for the activities of the Museum, through effectiveness in display and increased opportunities for study and enjoyment. Although the means with which to carry on its work are not so great as to allow full extension in all departments, the generous contributions received by the Trustees for the work of the Museum in the past lead to the hope that more will be forthcoming in the future.